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Details on Honduras Maneuvers Delayed

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The Pentagon has delayed announcing the second phase of a continuing military exercise in Central America because plans called for using more troops than administration officials had said would participate.

The second phase of Granadero I is scheduled to begin in one week in Honduras, and some Army units have been moved south for the maneuvers, according to sources. Announcement of which units will participate has been delayed.

Army Gen. Paul Gorman, head of the U.S. Southern Command in Panama, reportedly drafted plans for the exercise that called for a peak U.S. strength of more than 3,600 troops in Honduras during the next six weeks. The Pentagon had said that 1,000 troops would take part in the second phase of Granadero I and that as many as 1,700 troops would be in Honduras on an "interim" basis between exercises.

Officials spent several days trying to arrange the numbers to conform with previously announced limits and finally sent word to the Southern Command to scale back its plans. "He [Gorman] knows he has to stay within the guidelines," one official said, adding that final details are not complete.

U.S. training exercises in Honduras have become controversial since members of Congress accused the Pentagon of using the maneuvers to establish a semi-permanent presence in that nation, which borders Nicaragua and El Salvador. Since Operation Big Pine II began last August, the number of U.S. military personnel in Honduras has risen above 5,000 at times and never fallen much below 1,000.

Granadero I began April 1, much earlier than the Pentagon had announced, with about 800 Army engineers sent to build two airstrips, one near the Salvadoran border and the other near Nicaragua. From May

23 to June 30, 1,000 U.S. troops were to participate in "counterinsurgency" activities.

In a related development, newly elected Salvadoran president Jose Napoleon Duarte is scheduled to arrive here Saturday evening for a four-day visit, according to the Salvadoran Embassy. After appearing on "Meet the Press" (NBC, WRC) Sunday, Duarte is expected to meet with administration officials Monday and members of Congress Tuesday.

Congressional sources said Duarte asked to meet with Sen. Jesse Helms (R-N.C.), who charged last week that the CIA "bought the election" for Duarte. Helms is considering the request, the sources said.

Independent sources confirmed that the CIA put about \$2 million into the Salvadoran election campaign, helping Duarte, three other political parties and the central elections council. CIA officials told the Senate Intelligence Committee that the assistance had been nonpartisan, sources said.

Sens. Barry Goldwater (R-Ariz.) and Daniel Patrick Moynihan (D-N.Y.), chairman and vice chairman, respectively, of the intelligence committee, wrote last week to Senate Majority Leader Howard H. Baker Jr. (R-Tenn.) and Minority Leader Robert C. Byrd (D-W.Va.) and complained that Helms made public information given to the committee, said sources who saw the letter.

Helms has said his information came from Salvadoran newspapers, but he is known to have confirmed it with at least one committee member.

Byrd and Baker responded by suggesting that the committee draft a more general letter they can send to all senators. The letter could be sent this week, sources said.

In essence, it is "a reminder about the Senate rules on classified information," referring by number to several paragraphs of rules saying violators can be censured by the Senate ethics committee, the sources said.